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THE HOLY PENITENT

Or the *HISTORY* of *MARY MAGDALENE*,

Set forth in her Birth and Parantage, her most wicked course of Living, and as Wonderfull Conversion after she was dispossessed of seven Devils by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Her exemplary Piety, when she embraced Christianty, and manner of her Godly Death and Buriel. Being usefull in all Christian Families.

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The Hiſtory of Mary Magdalane.

MARY MAGDALENE, was born in a country village call'd Magdala which became a a city where the Inhabitants ſtill ſhew the Houſe of Mary Magdalene. Upon the weſt and north ſide of this city there lies a great plain preſe,ved only for paſture, and which St. Mark, the evangeliſt, call'd Dalmanutha, that is to ſay, drawn dry or poor land naked habitation, it being deriv'd of delal, he yath made dry, and moon a houſe or dwelling place. It may be a notable Figure in the chriſtian church, which in this world may rightly be ſaid to have a poor habitation, but yet is a Magdalene, that is a ſtrong and impregnable Tower againſt which the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail. Alſo it is to be obſerved, this city belonged to the tribe of Iſachar, on the Borders whereof, at Dalmanutha the phariſies and ſadduces tempted our bleſſed Saviour they demanded a ſign from Heaven according to the words of St Mathew Chap- 16 ver. 1 her parents deing Godly perſons took great care to bring this their youngeſt child iu the pathe of virtue, and till ſhe was 12 years of age, ſuch piety and modeſty, appeared in her actions, that ſhe gave the moſt promiſing hopes of becoming the glory of her ſex, for ſhe ſteadfaſt to the faith in which ſhe was bred obedient to her father and mother humble in all her actions, and very charitable tr the Pour.

But he parents changing this mortal Life for anothe, before ſhe reached the 13th year of her age, and leaving hhr verry rich, her riches and heauty was the occaſion of bringing ſeveral noble Jews to be her ſuiters, teey all ſtriving who ſhould gain the greateſt eſteem in her affections nothing was wanting in her admirers to entertrin her according as their eſtates would permit them in rich banquets. great preſents, and fine balls inſomuch

that these temptations working strangely on her inclination, her former devotion grew cold, and from a modek virgin became a common strumpet.

Now giving her self over ro all sensuallity, nothing but riotous actions was her chifest recreation and now too early slighting the worth and excelancy of her immortal soul, she ie so ungratefull to her creator to make all the Blcssings which he hath bestowed upon her in this World the opportunity of displaying her vanities.

Thus she co.tinued most notoriously wicked 'till she was about 30 years of age, when her eitious enormsties making her captive to the power of Hell she was possessed with 7 Devils, besides the yfliction of other infirmities but such was the goodness of our blessed Lord and Saviour whilst he was upon earth to perform the redention of mankind from eternal destruction, that taking compasion on this miserable Woman, and greatest sinner then living, he vouchsafed to only to heal her infirmities but dispossess her of 7 Devils, which greatly tormented her vile body.

Then for some retalliation for ihis nnmerited goodnes, she became a true penitent, repenting from the bottom of her heart of all the manford sins and trangressions, nay after eer miraculous conversion she minstred to Christ who being in the house of one Simon, St, Luke the evangelist tells us, that behold a woman in tbe city which was a sinner when she knew that Jesus sat at Teat in the pharisies house, brought a box of precious ointment, Chap 7. v 27. 38. Then she being upbraided by a pharisee for being a sinner, the same Evangelist tells us that our Saviour turning to this Woman he said unto Simon seest thou this Woman? I entered into thy House and thou gavest me no water for my Feet but she hath washed my feet with Tears and wipedthem with the hairs of her Head, thou gavest me no kiss, but this Woman since the time

time I came in hath not failed to kiſs my feet, mine head with oil thou did'ſt not anoint but this Woman hath anointed my feet with ointments, wherefore I ſay unto thee her ſins which are many are forgiven thy faith hath ſaved thee, go in peace, Chap. 7. v. 44 to the end

Now this Mary Magdalene was the ſiſter of Martha, who was encumbered about wordly things, as St. Luke tells in theſe words, now it came to paſs, as they went that he entered into a certain village, and a certain Woman named Martha, receiv'd him into the Houſe and ſhe had a ſiſter called Mary, which alſo ſat at Jeſus's feet & heard his words. But Martha was cumbered about much ſerving and came to him, and ſaid, Lord, doſt thou not care that my ſiſter hath left me to ſerve thee alone, bid her therefore that ſhe help me and Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto her Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one this is needful and Mary hath choſen that good part, which ſhall not be taken away from her. Luke the 10 v. 38 to the 42.

The place where the conerſion of Mary Magdalen was wrought was in Bethany. Which city was type of the church is always ſubject to the Croſs, and evpoſed to every calamity, and therefore is called Bethania, that is the houſe of ſorrow and affliction, being derived of balah ſignifying a houſe, and oni, ſignifying affliction, according to the prophecy of our Saviour, who foretold the afflictions that ſhould fall upon his church. You ſhall mourn but you ſhall be comforted

It was diſtant from Jeruſalem almoſt 2 mile towards the South eaſt. Borchardus the monk obſerved that cloſeby a well about ſtones throw out of this Town there is ſhewed the place where Martha met our Saviour Chriſt, when

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he came to Bethany and a little after called her ſiſter Mary to meet him.

There is alſo ſhewn in the Town the houſe of Simon the Leper where a Woman with an Allabaſter box of precious ointment poured upon our Saviours Head, not without the greateſt indignation of his Diciples, there's alſo to beſeen the houſe of Maatha to which our Savi- did oftimes reſort, and in that place there is to this Day a church built in honour of theſe two ſiſters, Mary, and Martha Magdalene which were ſiſters to Lazarus there is alſo the Sepulchar out of weich Lazarus was raiſed, af ter he had been dead and buried thre days, which ſtood cloſe by the ſaid church, and over it was built a chappel of Marble verry decent and comly. The Saracns hold Chappel in great eſtimation.

You cannot ſee the city of Jeruſalem from Bethany, becauſe of the mount of Olives but as ſoon as you aſſend a little Hill, in the way you go thence to Jeruſalem you may diſcern mount Sion and a part of the City, and when you are deſcended the Hill the city is again hidden af- ter that upon the left ſide of mount Olives, ſome ſtones caſt out from Bethphage, you do leave a ſmall village ſtanding upon the movntain of offence, where Solomon in times paſt committed Idolltry and from the village the Aſs and the colt was brought to Chriſt.

Not far from thence, upon the ſide as you go upon the mount of Olives, you come unto the place where Chriſt mouted upon his Aſs and a little after you may ſee the whole City of Jeruſalem, with Solomons Temple, and the church of the holy Sepulcher, with many other holy pla ces,.

After the Converſion of Mary Magdalene frch washer

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extraordinary Faith she believed Christ to be the Son of God. Her obedience to the doctrine Jesus, inspired her divine Soul to be a constant practitioner of thro' the remainder of her days in imitation of him who was obedient even unto an ignominous Death of the Cross she was also endowed with true christian humility, which by a strange apprehension lays hold of the mercy of God in Christ, and this goodness of God towards us makes our sins more odious even to our own eyes, no otherwise than the tender kindness of his Father makes the prodigal Child see more clearly his own Folly, and teus the degenerate Christian (like Mary Magdalene) being once entered into Spiritual Kingdom of Christ, sees more clearly his sins, then he did before his calling having receiv'd a greator light, the excellency of this virtue in all christians, is beyond Humah expression, and it was with good reason that St. Jerome a learned Father of the Church, stiled this the trefury of all other virtues. The primative Christians commonly usurp humility for virtue it self and Christ called it poorness of spirit and, discoursing on the beatitude of Man he sets in the front of all his benedictions. The great delight she took in hhmillitywousd often make her say after our Saviour's sufferings to those about her, my dear friends and fellow serzants, I do now greatly desire to imitate my Saviour, whose humillity, can never be sufficisntey extolled, full well he knew it to be the first step to eternal Life, Obediance the second the former of which to teach all Men he descended faom Heaven, the latter to demonstrate he became obedient to his Father, even the death of the Cross for my sins & those of the World.

Now behold Mary Magdelen's charity was nnprralell'd it was charity that drew her from the pleasures of the World, it was Charity that added wings to her feet, to

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look after our Saviours Body in the Sepulcher, it was charity compelled her to attend on her dying Lord wilst he was bleeding on the croſs, it was charity oblidged her to run and tell Peter they had taken away the Lord out of the Sepulcher, and laſtly it was charity forced her to love all that loved Jeſus Chriſt.

Mary Magdalene was preſent at the dea. h of our holy redeemer, with the virgin Mary and her ſiſter Mary Cleophas wheae with gaeat amazement and ſadneſs to ſee our Saviours ſacred body torn and pierced, tnd hung between two thieves. However her ſerrows wes much aſſwaged by her faith which aſſured her of his bleſſed reſurrection, the Boly ſpirit certified her that this was not a deſtroying death but a Triumphant one.

Yet ſometimes the ſtrings of her heart was ready to break to think of his cruel torturcs and afflictions, but as often comforted with a full aſſurance that ſhe ſhould overcome them all and death itſelf. She ſtood here [the ſon of God only excepted] the prime pattern uf ſolid faith and conſtant palience to all poſterity. In that neither the fear of Perſecution, or of the Reck and Scourge or death itſelf couln divide her from our Saviour.

Her carridge and behaziour was beyond the level of cenſure and in all things ſuitable to the modeſty and gravity of ſueh a pious Woman, ſhe fearing not all the fury of the jewiſh ſouldiers that enxiron'd her but ſtood ſecure and facee danger, tho' ſhe was an eye witneſs of of his paſſion and ſaw his limbs diſtended and racked, yet did not ehe evils ſhe ſaw wound her ſo deep as thoſe which pierced her ears when ſhe hearp him that was without ſin call'd a drunkard, a bleſphemet a breaker of the ſabbath a lover of prblicans and ſinners, yet did not all theſe killing objects theſe impious ſlanders drive her into de-

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for she was confident that the two persons in the Trinity would not forget the third. Now Melancton commending this Tragical story to our serious contemplation, he advises us that when tribulation and death itself comes upon us we imitate this good Woman who mixed a heart-killing sorrow, for Christ to his Death.

And truly when our blessed Lord and Saviour arose, on the third day from death to Life, he honoured Mary Magdelen with his first appearance which added great joy to her soul especially when after 40 days rest on earth she saw his triumphant ascention from mount Olive into Heaven.

Afterwards Mary Magdalene lived retired from the World conversing with none but Christs Apostels, and those they converted, every day she spent in meditaton and prayer, 'till at last a violent fever seized her she in the time of her visitation, was sensible to the last, she died in the 56 year of her age, generaly lamented by all those of Church and was honourably buried in the city of Magdala, where she born and in commemoration of her great holiness the 22 of July is observed in the Calender of the church of England.

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